



Laureates meet President

(7 Feb) President and Commander-in-Chief Peter Pellegrini received the laureates of the 27th Military Deed of the Year Awards, in the presence of DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, and Director of the DPM and MINDEF's Office Ms Karin Silberhorn.

In his remarks, the President pointed out that goodness, nobleness and courage have not disappeared from our lives, as proven by the laureates' actions, which will be an encouragement and inspiration to others. "You have demonstrated that a soldier's strength lies not just in his weapons and uniform, but, above all, in his heart and determination to stand on the side of good and justice." The President praised Lt Peter Jurov, the awardee in the 'Rescue of Life' category, for his presence of mind when providing vital first aid to a person suffering from a cardiac arrest; Pte Dominik Jurko, the awardee in the 'Helping the Public' category, for subduing a dangerous attacker on a train; Petra Džerengová and Beáta Gottzmanová, teachers of Štefánik Primary School in Spišská Belá and holders of the award in the 'Friend of the Forces' category, for their meritorious contributions to encouraging patriotism and respect for the elderly and veterans. Also recognised was ex-airman of 51 Wng Prešov Major Štefan Veliký (promoted posthumously), who won the 'Service to the Country' category for his part in enhancing cooperation among the Air SAR Service, the Ground SAR Service, the Fire and Rescue Service Prešov, and the Police Depts Prešov and Košice as part of the Rescue exercise series.

"Acts of heroism do not derive from a desire for recognition, but from pure humanity and willingness to help. Let us try to be better, more attentive to each other and willing to reach out and selflessly lend a helping hand. This is how we can bring the spirit of reconciliation and understanding back to Slovakia," the President urged.

The aim of the Awards is to highlight the extraordinary actions of soldiers and ordinary citizens who do a lot to popularise SVK Forces and the breadth of work being undertaken by them.

MOD to provide grants to projects

(3 Feb) The Ministry of Defence issued a call for submission of grant applications under the new MOD Grant Scheme 2025, published on the MOD website on 31 Jan. Funding will be provided for military-themed, educational, sporting, cultural and social activities as much as for personnel replenishment and the protection and development of the nation's historical and cultural heritage with the focus on military history. Grants may also be awarded to cover the participation costs for events hosted by the international organisations that work closely with the Armed Forces.

The MOD Grant Scheme offers financial support of between €5,000-€100,000 to projects by civic associations, foundations, interest groupings, non-investment funds, non-profit organisations, and municipalities. This year, the MOD has set aside the historically highest amount of grants ever given in the programme's history – €1 million, compared to €520,000 last year. Applications for funding, which are to be delivered by regular mail or in person, close 31 Mar 2025. For more information, visit the MOD website.

Dukla Military Sports Centre athlete Gabriela Gajanová's success

(3 Feb) SVK slalom canoeist and only medallist at the 2024 Summer Olympics Matej Beňuš won the Sportsman of the Year Award. Gabriela Gajanová, athlete of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, finished 2nd, and tennis player Anna Karolína Schmiedlová took 3rd place, followed by tennis player Rebecca Šramková and skateboarder Richard Tury in 4th and 5th places. The 'Best Team' category was won by our tennis players from the Billie Jean King Cup Finals. Figure skater Jozef Sabovčík was recognised as a Legend of SVK Sport. The results of the Awards by the Sport Editors Club were announced at a gala evening at the Bratislava Opera House on 3 Feb.

Gabriela Gajanová has experienced the most successful year of her career. At the European Athletics Championships in Rome, she won a silver medal in the 800m race. Finishing 11th with a time of 1:58.22 at the Paris Olympics, she improved the SVK record in the 800m semifinals after 37 years. "I've been following these Awards since I started competing in the youth categories and I wished I would stand here one day. The fact that I've finally got here this year means a lot to me and I'm very happy about it. I did not expect that a silver medal from Rome would earn me the same place in the Awards," she said.

In the Individuals category, Petra Vlhová, skier of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, placed 8th in the Awards.



- To replace its 'Duty Officer for CIS Control' (DRKIS) Service for official announcements across the entirety of Defence, 6 Sig Regt Trenčín has launched the **Slovak Armed Forces Portal**. Meanwhile, the dual operation of both information services will last until 15 Feb. More information on the release of announcements via the new Portal can be found on the SVK Armed Forces Contact Centre page on DefNet. To allow full functionality, please use the Microsoft Edge or Google Chrome browsers.

- MILMEDCOM Ružomberok was visited by a delegation of the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava. The five-member delegation, led by U.S. Defence Attaché LTC Joshua Passer, was briefed on MILMEDCOM's structure, facilities, tasks, activities, and senior medical leaders. Both sides participated in a discussion to explore avenues of further cooperation between the Defence Medical Services (DMS) in the SVK and U.S. Armed Forces and the Indiana National Guard.

- Commander of MILMEDCOM Ružomberok and Surgeon General of the Slovak Armed Forces **Brig Gen Roman Jantoš MD** convened a Military Council (MC) meeting, bringing together the chiefs of all MILMEDCOM branches and sections. He briefed them on the results of the SVK CHOD's Commanders Conference, took stock of the tasks performed so far, and set out the new goals ahead. For their work, selected MILMEDCOM staff were recognised with accolades.

- The International Courses Section of the SVK Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš hosted the 13th NATO-certified **Introduction to the Planning of Joint Operations (IPJO) Course**, with participation of officers from Armenia, Poland, Tunisia, Switzerland and Slovenia. The course allows the participants to familiarise themselves with the Operations Planning Process (OPP) and Operational Plans (OPLANs) in a NATO HQ, covering all aspects essential to the conduct of effective and successful operations.

- The SVK Military Academy (AOS) delivered the **Hand-to-Hand Combat Course** at the 'Graduate' level. Due to the high physical demands of military martial arts, this course is among the toughest in our Armed Forces. Only selected officer cadets, two Armed Forces soldiers, and two instructors of the AOS Physical Training and Sports Dept took part.

- The **SVK RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps's Jubilee Year Pilgrimage to Rome and the Vatican** began on 6 Feb as part of the Holy See-organised 'Jubilee of the Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel'. Over 90 SVK soldiers, policemen, security personnel, and rescuers joined Bishop František Rábek after his previous official programme and meetings at the Vatican. The pilgrimage culminated with a special Holy Mass celebrated for the intention of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel by Pope Francis in St Peter's Square on 9 Feb, and concluded with a Holy Mass at St Sebastian's Cathedral in Bratislava on 11 Feb.

- Commanders of the SVK Army, SOF forces, and 82 Jnt Spt Bde restored the tradition of holding the **Trenčín Garrison Community Ball** on 7 Feb. SVK CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko accepted the invitation to attend. Moderating the event was Juraj Bača, with performances from the Party Beat Band and four-time Fitness World Champion Michal Barbier. A prize draw was also held on the night.

- After defeating David Carr (USA) in the finals, freestyle wrestler **Tajmuraz Salkazanov** of the Dukla Military Sports Centre won the United World Wrestling (UWW) Zagreb Open Senior Ranking Series in Croatia.

- Athlete **Gabriela Gajanová** of the Dukla Military Sports Centre won the World Athletics Indoor Tour (WAIT) Gold meeting in Czechia's Ostrava on 4 Feb and placed 7th in the women's 800m race at the WAIT Silver meeting in France's Metz on 8 Feb.

DEPMINDEF at SVK AF HQ Zvolen



(6 Feb) DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič was welcomed to SVK AF HQ Zvolen by (DS) Col Adolf Daubner, DCOS SVK AF HQ Zvolen. Also in attendance at the working meeting were Maj Gen (Ret'd) Miroslav Kocian and Lt Col Matúš Glinda, both from the DEPMINDEF's Office,

and the chiefs of the SVK AF HQ branches. They sat down for a discussion on the future of the Slovak Air Force – equipment modernisation, asset procurement, infrastructure development, and personnel training. Mr Vojtašovič concluded his away-day trip with a visit to 2 SVK AF BDE Zvolen.

Sered-based engineers on SIMEX

(5 Feb) The SVK Military Academy's Simulation Centre hosted a computer-assisted simulation exercise (SIMEX) for engineers from 901 Eng Br Sened. The aim of the exercise was to rehearse taking a SVK Army convoy through a dangerous regional area. The soldiers were faced with simulated threats such as a military convoy under fire, IEDs on the roads, vehicle breakdowns, and protests by local residents. The exercise scenarios also featured contact with armed enemies and artillery attacks on the convoy. As part of the shoot scenarios, the engineers fired weapons at the electronic screen of the 'Sting' simulator firing range, challenged with realistic engagement simulations. Much of the focus was on the soldiers' synchronisation of fire, immediate response to unexpected threats, and effective handling of simulated tactical combat situations.

OC triumphs twice ahead of WMWG



(6 Feb) Races to secure qualification for the International Military Sports Council (CISM) Winter Military World Games (WMWG) across disciplines such as ski mountaineering, cross-country skiing and winter cross-country running took place at the Slovak

WMWG qualification events, known as the "Militariad", in Skalka pri Kremnici and Králiky. Among the military sportsmen and women there were officer cadets (OCs) representing the SVK Military Academy in the Skimo and Winter CC Running disciplines, with OC Terézia Klementisová triumphing in the women's ski mountaineering and cross-country races. The 5th CISM WMWG will be held in Lucerne, Switzerland.

LOTN and VHM Museum work together to restore collection objects

(3 Feb) The Institute of Military History (VHÚ) has long cooperated with Aircraft Repair Company Trenčín (LOTN) in the restoration and conservation of the Museum of Military History (VHM) Piešťany Collection.

Last year, the skilled hands of Trenčín-based technicians breathed new life into four collection objects – they restored an Aero L-29 Delfín jet trainer, a Mil Mi-24V multi-role helicopter,

a MiG-23UBC jet trainer, and a turboprop-powered Let L-410MA transport aircraft, which were, only until recently, on display in the open spaces at VHM Piešťany. Due to being exposed to the long-term negative effects of the weather ele-



ments, the airframes of the aircraft had to be treated and repaired. Repairs were confined to the aircraft's mechanical control parts, undercarriages, rubber parts, aircraft tyres, and cockpit and other windows. Aircraft enthusiasts will appreciate the completeness of flight controls in place and the craftsmanship of the upholsters who renovated the interiors.

A total of 16 large collection objects have

passed through the hands of LOTN pros. The exhibits will be on display in the Museum's permanent 'Aircraft Gallery' in the newly refurbished Hangars 1 and 2 (H-1 and H-2) at Piešťany airport.